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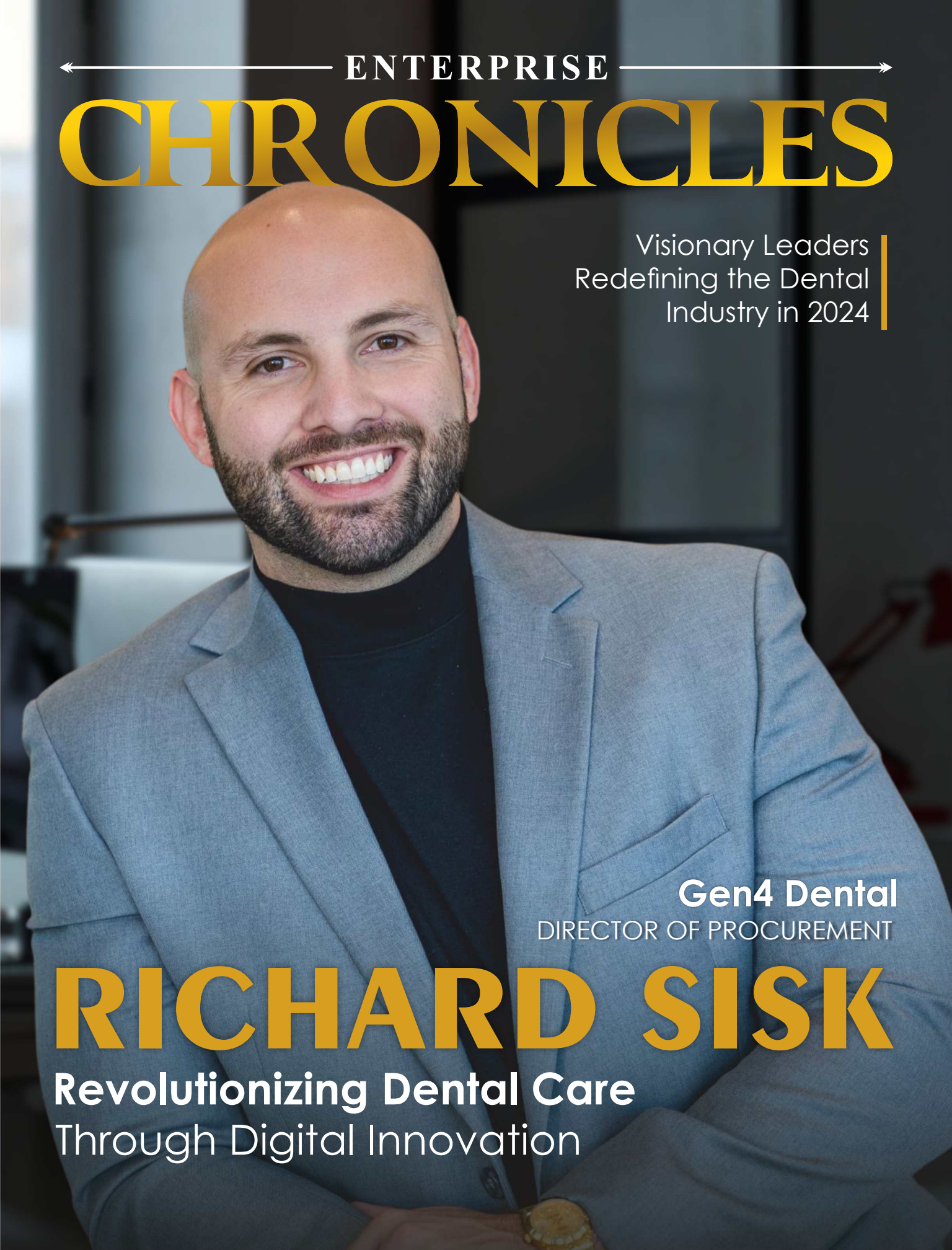
Visionary Leaders Redefining the Dental Industry in 2024



Gen4 Dental
DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT

RICHARD SISK

Revolutionizing Dental Care Through Digital Innovation

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erspective

Redefining Smiles

Dear Readers,

Welcome to our latest issue of where we proudly present "Visionary Leaders Redefining the Dental Industry in 2024." This edition shines a spotlight on the remarkable individuals who are not only transforming the way we think about dental care but also leading the charge toward a future where innovation and compassion go hand in hand.

In a rapidly evolving field, these leaders are setting new standards and challenging the status quo. They are the pioneers who are redefining patient care, integrating cutting-edge technologies, and fostering an environment of excellence and empathy. Their contributions are shaping a brighter, healthier future for all of us.

As you delve into this issue, you'll find inspiring stories of resilience, ingenuity, and leadership. From groundbreaking advancements in dental procedures to revolutionary approaches in patient care, these visionaries are at the forefront of a transformation that promises to enhance the quality of dental services and the overall patient experience.

We invite you to explore the journeys and achievements of these extraordinary individuals. Their passion and commitment are a testament to what can be achieved when vision meets dedication. Their stories not only celebrate their successes but also offer valuable insights into the future of dental care.

On the cover story of this magazine, we have featured Richard Sisk, Director of Procurement at Gen4 Dental Partners. His entrepreneurial spirit is defined by his emphasis on relationship-building. He attributes his success not only to his diverse skill set but also to the connections he has forged throughout his career. Networking and continuous learning are foundational principles that have propelled him forward in various industries.

Thank you for joining us in honoring these trailblazers who are shaping the future of dentistry. Their work is paving the way for a new era of dental excellence, and we are thrilled to share their stories with you.

GaryO

Gary Olson

CONTENTS

COVER STORY

10. RICHARD SISK

16. ARTICLE: Manufacturing Execution Systems: Revolutionizing the Manufacturing Industry

22. ARTICLE: Online Education: Transforming Learning in the Digital Era

28. ARTICLE: Robotics and Automation: Shaping the Future of Industries

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RICHARD SISK

Revolutionizing Dental Care Through Digital Innovation

DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT

In the ever-evolving landscape of healthcare, the dental industry has often lagged behind in adopting cutting-edge digital technologies. However, **Richard Sisk, Director of Procurement at Gen4 Dental Partners**, is changing that narrative with a pioneering approach that integrates digital innovation into dental care. His leadership and vision are driving the transformation of dentistry, setting new standards for patient care and operational efficiency.

From Finance to Dentistry: A Journey of Innovation

Richard Sisk's career path is a testament to the power of diverse experiences in shaping an innovative leader. His journey began with an undergraduate degree in finance, providing a strong foundation in financial management and strategic thinking. He then ventured into the retail and transportation sectors, where he honed his skills in operations, account management, and customer satisfaction. These roles equipped him with a comprehensive understanding of business dynamics and the importance of operational efficiency.

Transitioning to healthcare sales, Richard applied his expertise in pricing strategies and return-on-investment models, preparing him for his eventual move into procurement. His background in various industries allowed him to approach dental procurement with a unique perspective, focusing on both cost management and quality improvement.

Driving Digital Transformation in Dentistry

At Gen4 Dental Partners, Richard Sisk is at the forefront of digital transformation in the dental industry. His role involves overseeing procurement across a wide range of supplies, from clinical tools to office equipment. Richard's focus on integrating digital technologies into dental care reflects his belief in the potential of artificial intelligence and data-driven solutions to revolutionize the field.

One of Richard's key initiatives has been to address the outdated systems and practices that have historically hindered progress in dental care. By introducing advanced procurement software and streamlining purchasing processes, he has improved efficiency and transparency. These changes not only result in cost savings but also enhance the overall quality of care provided to patients.

A Patient-Centered Approach

Richard's commitment to patient care is evident in his approach to procurement. Upon joining Gen4 Dental, he identified several inefficiencies in the procurement process, including inconsistencies in supply purchasing at the office level. To address these issues, Richard implemented a standardized procurement process, incorporating new software to manage spending and reporting.

This patient-centered approach has yielded significant benefits. By ensuring that supplies are purchased in a coordinated manner, Richard has achieved cost savings while maintaining high standards of patient care. His efforts to involve healthcare providers in decision-making further demonstrate his dedication to balancing cost efficiencies with the needs of patients.

Building Relationships for Success

In addition to his technical expertise, Richard Sisk values the importance of relationships in his professional journey. He believes that success is not solely defined by business achievements but also by the connections and support networks built along the way. Richard's ability to navigate different sectors and embrace new challenges reflects his entrepreneurial mindset.

His emphasis on relationships extends to his work at Gen4 Dental, where he prioritizes building trust with healthcare providers. By fostering open communication and involving providers in procurement decisions, Richard ensures that their needs are met while achieving cost efficiencies.

Navigating Challenges and Embracing Opportunities

Richard's innovative approach to procurement is not without its challenges. The dental industry's slow adoption of digital tools and the limitations of insurance reimbursement pose significant obstacles. However, Richard remains optimistic about the future. He believes that technological advancements, such as AI-powered diagnostics, have the potential to overcome these challenges and transform dental care.

Richard's proactive approach to risk management further underscores his commitment to innovation. He has implemented rigorous processes to vet vendors, ensuring that they meet both cost and quality standards. In light of recent cyberattacks on dental suppliers, Richard's emphasis on cybersecurity in vendor management highlights his dedication to safeguarding the company against supply chain disruptions.

Shaping the Future of Dental Care

Richard Sisk's vision for the future of dentistry is one marked by technological advancement and improved patient outcomes. At Gen4 Dental, he is leveraging collective buying power to reduce costs and enhance accessibility to dental care. His belief in the potential of digital tools to revolutionize the field is driving his efforts to integrate these technologies into everyday practice.

Despite the current limitations in digital adoption, Richard remains focused on the potential for change. He envisions a future where advanced technologies, coupled with necessary reforms in insurance coverage, will lead to more efficient and accessible dental care. His determination to push the boundaries of traditional practices is shaping the future of dentistry.

Advice for Aspiring Entrepreneurs

As a forward-thinking leader, Richard Sisk offers valuable insights for aspiring entrepreneurs. He emphasizes the importance of adaptability, perseverance, and continuous learning. Richard's own journey, marked by diverse experiences and a commitment to innovation, serves as a testament to the power of these qualities.

His message to those looking to make their mark in the industry is clear: stay committed to your goals, embrace change, and never stop learning. Richard's success is a result of his ability to navigate obstacles with determination and a forward-thinking mindset. His journey is an inspiring example of how innovation and leadership can drive significant change in any field.

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MANUFACTURING Execution Systems:

Revolutionizing the Manufacturing Industry

Efficiency, precision, and flexibility are essential for success. As technology continues to evolve, Manufacturing Execution Systems (MES) have emerged as a vital tool to streamline operations, improve productivity, and ensure product quality. These systems bridge the gap between the shop floor and the top-floor systems, such as Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) solutions, enabling manufacturers to control and monitor the entire production process in real-time.

What Are Manufacturing Execution Systems?
A Manufacturing Execution System (MES) is a comprehensive software platform that manages and monitors the production floor in real-time. It serves as the nerve center of a manufacturing plant, tracking every detail of the production process from raw material acquisition to finished product delivery. By integrating MES with other systems, manufacturers gain deeper insights into production performance, enabling more informed decision-making and operational improvements.

Smart Industrial Control System
Dashboard
Overview
Product report
Performance
Product Quality
Machine State
Machine 1
Machine 2
Machine 3
Monthly Summary
Product Quality
Performance
32.04%
99%
Power consumption
Machine State
25%
67%
Fine

Key functions of an MES include:

- **Production scheduling**: Ensuring that production processes are optimized and executed on time.
- **Real-time monitoring**: Offering visibility into all aspects of the manufacturing process, including machine performance, material flow, and labor efficiency.
- **Quality management**: Ensuring that products meet required specifications and quality standards.
- **Data collection and reporting**: Providing real-time data on production metrics, performance, and outcomes.
- **Traceability**: Offering the ability to trace materials and components throughout the production cycle for compliance and quality assurance.

How Manufacturing Execution Systems Work

Manufacturing Execution Systems are designed to gather data from machines, production lines, and workers on the factory floor. This information is processed in real-time, providing manufacturers with a clear overview of the status of production, inventory levels, machine health, and operator performance. Through continuous monitoring and control, MES helps optimize every step of the production process.

In addition to data collection, MES integrates with other systems such as:

- **Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP)**: Coordinating high-level business activities, such as procurement, inventory management, and customer order fulfillment.
- **Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA)**: Controlling equipment and collecting data from industrial systems.
- **Product Lifecycle Management (PLM)**: Managing product development and design processes.

By linking these systems together, MES acts as the connective tissue that ensures smooth communication and coordination across the entire manufacturing enterprise.

The Benefits of Implementing MES

The advantages of using **Manufacturing Execution Systems** are manifold, helping businesses maintain a competitive edge in the global marketplace:

1. Increased Efficiency and Productivity

With real-time data collection and automated decision-making, MES helps manufacturers reduce downtime and optimize machine utilization. It allows operators to identify production bottlenecks and adjust workflows in real-time, ensuring that production stays on track.

2. Enhanced Quality Control

Quality is paramount in manufacturing, and MES ensures that quality standards are met at every stage of production. By collecting detailed data, manufacturers can spot defects early, prevent costly rework, and maintain compliance with industry regulations.

3. Improved Traceability and Compliance

For industries with strict regulatory requirements, such as food, pharmaceuticals, or aerospace, traceability is critical. MES tracks every material, component, and production step, allowing for complete traceability and ensuring that manufacturers can meet regulatory demands.

4. Cost Reduction

By optimizing production processes, reducing waste, and minimizing machine downtime, MES contributes to significant cost savings. Additionally, better resource utilization and inventory management help manufacturers avoid excess inventory and reduce material costs.

5. Real-Time Visibility

With MES, manufacturers have real-time visibility into their operations. This allows decision-makers to act quickly, prevent disruptions, and ensure smooth production workflows.

Key Features of Manufacturing Execution Systems

Several features define a robust and effective **Manufacturing Execution System**:

1. Production Monitoring and Control

MES monitors every detail of the production process, from machine performance to operator efficiency. It helps identify potential problems before they cause delays and offers solutions to improve overall productivity.

2. Inventory and Material Management

MES tracks inventory levels in real-time, ensuring that manufacturers have the materials they need when they need them. It also optimizes material flow and reduces waste, contributing to cost savings and improved efficiency.

3. Data Collection and Analysis

The data collected by MES provides valuable insights into production performance, machine efficiency, and quality control. Manufacturers can use this data to improve processes, reduce waste, and enhance product quality.

4. Workforce Management

MES offers tools for managing labor resources, tracking employee performance, and ensuring that workers are following standard operating procedures. It enables managers to allocate resources more effectively and optimize labor productivity.

5. Compliance and Reporting

MES provides real-time data for regulatory reporting, ensuring that manufacturers comply with industry standards. It also enables better traceability for quality assurance and recalls.

The Role of MES in Industry 4.0

The concept of **Industry 4.0**, also known as the Fourth Industrial Revolution, emphasizes the use of smart technologies, automation, and data exchange in manufacturing processes. **Manufacturing Execution Systems** play a critical role in this transformation by enabling manufacturers to embrace digitalization and automation.

MES systems facilitate the seamless integration of connected devices, IoT sensors, and automated systems into the production environment. This allows manufacturers to collect vast amounts of data, perform advanced analytics, and drive continuous improvement in their operations. Additionally, MES enables the implementation of **Smart Factories**, where machines, systems, and humans interact seamlessly. In a smart factory, MES serves as the command center, coordinating activities, automating processes, and enabling real-time decision-making.

Choosing the Right MES for Your Business

Implementing the right **Manufacturing Execution System** can have a significant impact on your business's success. When choosing an MES, it's essential to consider factors such as scalability, ease of integration with existing systems, and industry-specific features.

Before investing in an MES solution, manufacturers should assess their current operations, identify areas for improvement, and establish clear goals for what they want the system to achieve. Working with experienced vendors who understand your industry is also crucial to ensuring a smooth implementation and maximizing the return on investment.

Conclusion

In conclusion, **Manufacturing Execution Systems (MES)** are essential tools for modern manufacturers looking to optimize their production processes, improve quality control, and enhance overall efficiency. With its real-time data collection, seamless integration with other systems, and robust reporting capabilities, MES helps manufacturers stay competitive in an ever-changing global marketplace. As industries continue to evolve toward **Industry 4.0** and smart factories, the role of MES will only become more critical in driving innovation and operational success.

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Online Education:
TRANSFORMING LEARNING IN THE DIGITAL ERA

The rapid evolution of technology has led to a dramatic shift in how we access and consume knowledge. Among the most transformative innovations is online education, which has changed traditional learning approaches, offering flexibility, accessibility, and personalized experiences to learners across the globe. Whether it's short courses or accredited degrees, this form of education provides countless opportunities for individuals looking to develop skills, advance their careers, or pursue personal interests.

The Growth of Online Learning

Over the last decade, online learning has seen significant growth. Its global market is expected to reach new heights, driven by the demand for remote learning solutions and technological advancements. There are several reasons why the world is turning to virtual learning platforms:

Convenience: One of the biggest appeals of online education is that it eliminates geographical barriers, allowing people from different regions to study without the need for relocation.

Affordability: Compared to traditional educational methods, virtual courses often come with lower tuition fees. Additionally, learners save on commuting, accommodation, and physical resources like textbooks.

Wide Variety of Courses: Whether you're interested in developing new technical skills, diving into creative pursuits, or earning a full degree, there are endless options available online.

Self-Paced Learning: Unlike traditional classrooms where the pace is often set by the instructor, online platforms allow students to work through content at a speed that suits them.

Advantages of Virtual Learning

Virtual education offers numerous advantages, making it an appealing choice for modern learners:

1. Flexibility and Customization

Virtual learning platforms provide the flexibility to study from anywhere, at any time, making it an excellent option for those balancing jobs, family, or other commitments. Additionally, many courses allow for customizable learning paths, so students can focus on areas most relevant to their goals.

2. Cost-Effective

Virtual education is not only more affordable in terms of tuition but also helps reduce additional costs associated with traditional schooling, such as housing and transportation. Many online courses also offer free or low-cost resources.

3. A Broader Selection of Subjects

Online platforms offer a wide array of courses covering everything from academic subjects to practical, career-oriented skills. Some learners use these courses to supplement their formal education, while others rely on them to acquire completely new skill sets.

4. Career Development

Many professionals turn to online programs for career advancement. Earning additional certifications or degrees online allows individuals to improve their skills while

continuing to work, helping them stand out in a competitive job market.

Challenges in the Online Education Space
Though online learning has many benefits, it also comes with challenges:

1. Time Management

Since online programs typically operate without fixed schedules, learners need to be disciplined in managing their time. It can be easy to fall behind without a clear structure, so effective time management is crucial.

2. Limited Social Interaction

One downside to virtual learning is the lack of face-to-face interaction. While many platforms include forums and collaborative tools, they may not entirely replicate the in-person experience of traditional classes.

3. Technical Issues

As digital education relies on technology, connectivity problems or access to adequate equipment can hinder the learning process. Not everyone has equal access to stable internet or the necessary devices.

Popular Platforms for Online Learning

Numerous platforms provide high-quality content in various fields. Some of the most widely recognized include:

Coursera: Offering a range of courses from renowned institutions, Coursera provides degrees and certificates in fields such as business, technology, and health.

Udemy: Known for its affordable pricing, Udemy hosts a diverse collection of short courses aimed at skill development.

edX: A collaboration between top universities like Harvard and MIT, edX offers many free courses alongside premium options.

Skillshare: This platform is ideal for creative professionals, with content on design, writing, photography, and more.

The Future of Online Learning

As technology evolves, the world of virtual learning is expected to become even more innovative. Some trends shaping the future include:

1. Virtual Reality (VR) and Augmented Reality (AR)

These technologies can simulate immersive learning environments, making online education more engaging, especially for hands-on fields like medicine and engineering.

2. Artificial Intelligence (AI)

AI will further personalize education, adapting learning materials to the needs of individual students. AI-driven tutoring systems are already being used to provide real-time feedback.

3. Microlearning

Microlearning focuses on delivering information in bite-sized chunks, making it easier for busy individuals to incorporate learning into their daily schedules. This trend is growing, particularly in corporate training and upskilling environments.

4. Lifelong Learning

The future workforce will likely need constant retraining and upskilling due to rapid technological advancements. As a result, more people will turn to online platforms for continued education throughout their careers.

Conclusion

Online education is redefining the learning landscape, offering flexible and accessible options that cater to diverse learners. With its cost-efficiency, vast course offerings, and opportunities for career advancement, it's no wonder that virtual education continues to rise in popularity. While it comes with its challenges, such as the need for self-discipline and technological access, the benefits far outweigh the drawbacks. As innovation continues to drive new learning methods, online education will likely play an even more significant role in the future of learning.

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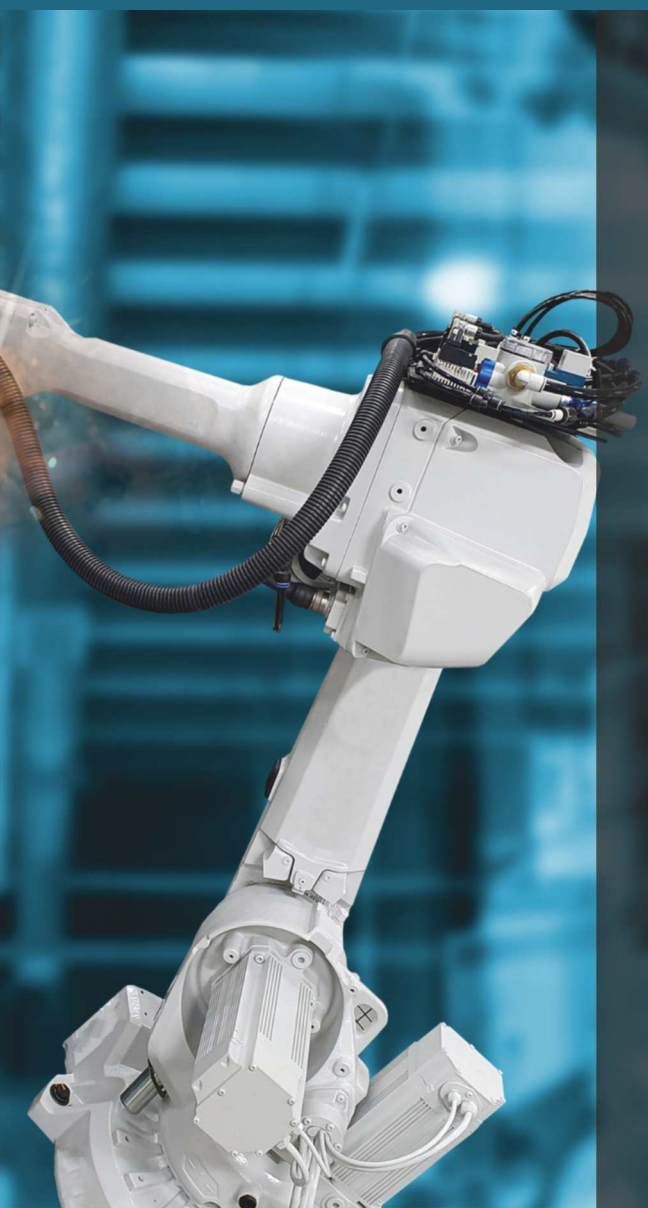


Have you ever wondered how much of our world is already run by machines? From self-driving cars to automated factories, the integration of robotics and automation is revolutionizing the way industries operate. No longer confined to science fiction, these technologies are becoming an essential part of modern-day businesses, improving efficiency, accuracy, and cost-effectiveness. But what exactly is driving this rapid adoption across sectors?

What Are Robotics and Automation?

At their core, it refer to technologies that perform tasks typically carried out by humans, but with greater speed, precision, and repeatability. Robotics involves designing, building, and operating machines (robots) to carry out physical tasks, while automation refers to the use of control systems to handle processes with minimal human intervention.

The convergence of these two fields has led to transformative advancements in industries like manufacturing, healthcare, agriculture, and logistics, offering solutions that streamline operations and reduce human error. Robotics and automation are not just reshaping the workforce; they are laying the foundation for future innovations that will define the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

The Evolution of Robotics and Automation

They have evolved significantly since their inception. Initially, automation was confined to simple, repetitive tasks in manufacturing, such as assembly line work. However, advancements in technology, especially artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning, have expanded the capabilities of robots and automation systems. Today, these technologies can perform complex tasks like real-time decision-making, predictive maintenance, and autonomous navigation.

The earliest robots were mechanical arms used in factories for welding and assembly. Now, robots are capable of interacting with their environment, adapting to changes, and even learning from their experiences. Automation systems, once restricted to basic functions, now control entire production lines, optimize workflows, and even manage supply chains.

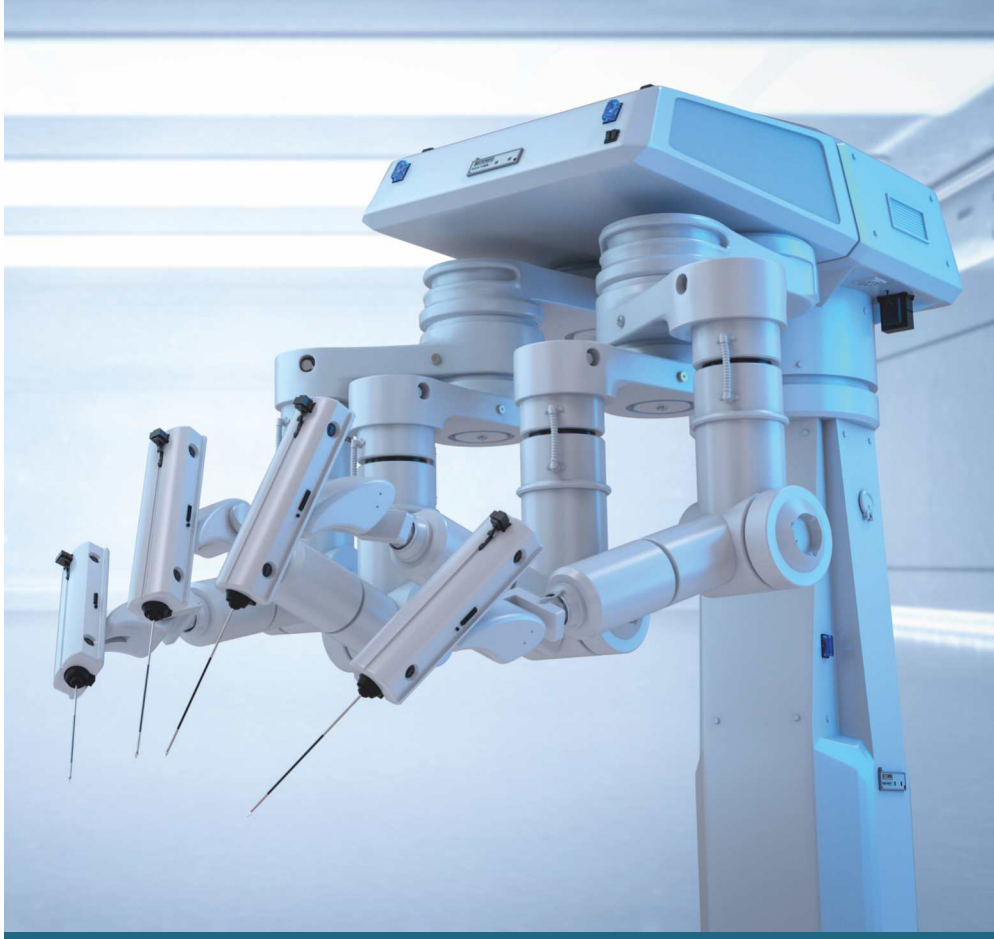
Applications of Robotics and Automation in Industries

1. Manufacturing

The manufacturing industry has been a primary beneficiary of it. Automated systems have revolutionized production lines by increasing speed and reducing the margin for error. Robots handle everything from assembly to quality control, and they can operate 24/7 without the need for breaks or shifts. These technologies have significantly reduced operational costs, allowing companies to meet higher production demands while maintaining quality standards.

2. Healthcare

In healthcare, robotics and automation are improving patient care and



streamlining operations. Surgical robots, for example, assist doctors in performing minimally invasive procedures with greater precision. Automation is also making its way into administrative tasks, such as patient record management and appointment scheduling. These technologies are helping healthcare providers focus more on patient care, reducing the time spent on routine tasks.

3. Agriculture

Agriculture is another sector where robotics and automation are making a profound impact. Automated machinery can plant, monitor, and harvest crops with greater efficiency than human labor. Drones equipped with sensors can monitor crop health, while autonomous tractors and harvesters reduce the need

for manual labor. This not only boosts productivity but also enables farmers to make data-driven decisions about their operations.

4. Logistics and Supply Chain

The logistics industry is experiencing a seismic shift due to robotics and automation. Automated warehouses use robots to pick, pack, and ship goods, reducing delivery times and human error. Self-driving trucks and drones are being tested for last-mile delivery, promising to further enhance the efficiency of supply chains. They are also helping companies manage inventory more effectively, ensuring that stock levels are optimized and products are delivered on time.

The Role of AI in Robotics and Automation

Artificial intelligence (AI) plays a crucial role in advancing them. With AI, machines can go beyond pre-programmed instructions and adapt to changing environments. They can learn from data, recognize patterns, and make decisions in real time. AI-powered robots are becoming smarter and more autonomous, capable of

performing complex tasks such as diagnostics in healthcare or predictive maintenance in industrial settings.

For example, AI-driven robots in manufacturing can detect defects in real-time, ensuring quality control without halting production. In logistics, AI optimizes routes for autonomous vehicles, reducing fuel consumption and delivery times. By combining AI with them, industries can achieve unprecedented levels of efficiency, allowing machines to make intelligent decisions without human intervention.

Benefits of Robotics and Automation

1. Increased Productivity

One of the most significant advantages of this is the boost in productivity. Machines can work continuously without fatigue, drastically increasing output. In industries like manufacturing, this has led to faster production cycles and higher output levels. Automated systems are also less prone to errors, ensuring consistency in quality and reducing waste.

2. Cost Efficiency

While the initial investment in robotics and automation technology can be high, the long-term savings are substantial. Automated systems reduce the need for manual labor, lower the chances of human error, and cut down on production costs. Businesses can also operate round the clock, eliminating the need for overtime pay or extra shifts.

3. Improved Accuracy and Precision

They excel in performing tasks that require high precision and accuracy. For instance, in medical surgeries, robotic systems can carry out delicate procedures with minimal risk of error. In manufacturing, automated machinery ensures uniformity in products, which is essential for industries like electronics and automotive manufacturing.

4. Enhanced Safety

In industries like mining, construction, and chemical manufacturing, robotics and automation have significantly improved safety. Machines can be used to perform dangerous tasks, reducing the risk of injury to human workers. This not only protects the workforce but also reduces liability for companies.

Challenges Facing Robotics and Automation

Despite the numerous benefits, the widespread adoption of robotics and automation comes with challenges. One of the main concerns is the displacement of human labor. As machines take over more tasks, the demand for human workers in specific industries decreases. This has raised concerns about job loss and the need for workers to reskill or transition to other fields.

Another challenge is the high cost of implementation. While robotics and automation can lead to long-term savings, the initial setup costs can be a barrier for smaller businesses. Additionally, the integration of these systems into existing workflows can be complex, requiring significant changes to infrastructure and processes.

The Future of Robotics and Automation

The future of robotics and automation is filled with exciting possibilities. As technology continues to advance, machines will become even more intelligent, autonomous, and capable of interacting with their environment in more sophisticated ways. Robotics and automation will likely extend into new sectors, such as education, retail, and customer service, revolutionizing the way we live and work.

In the coming years, we can expect to see greater collaboration between humans and robots, with machines taking over repetitive and dangerous tasks, while humans focus on more creative and strategic roles. This shift will require a change in the workforce, with an emphasis on digital skills and adaptability.

Robotics and Automation in Everyday Life

While they have primarily been associated with industries like manufacturing and logistics, their impact is becoming increasingly visible in everyday life. From robotic vacuum cleaners to smart home systems, automation is making daily tasks more convenient and efficient.

In retail, for example, automation is being used to manage inventory, process payments, and even assist customers through AI-powered chatbots. In the transportation industry, self-driving cars and drones are becoming more common, promising to reshape the way we commute and deliver goods. Robotics and automation are no longer limited to industrial use but are becoming integral to how we live, shop, and interact with technology.

The Ethical Considerations of Robotics and Automation

As they become more advanced, ethical considerations around their use are becoming more pressing. One of the main concerns is the potential for job displacement. While automation can create new jobs in tech and engineering, it can also render certain roles obsolete, particularly in industries that rely heavily on manual labor.

There are also concerns about privacy and security, especially as AI-powered robots and automated systems collect and process vast amounts of data. Ensuring that these technologies are used ethically and that appropriate safeguards are in place is essential to preventing misuse.

CONCLUSION

Embracing the Future of Robotics and Automation

Robotics and automation are not just buzzwords; they are driving forces behind the modern industrial revolution. As these technologies continue to evolve, they will reshape industries, create new opportunities, and improve efficiency across the board. While challenges like job displacement and ethical concerns need to be addressed, the benefits of robotics and automation are undeniable.

Businesses and industries that embrace robotics and automation will be better positioned to thrive in an increasingly competitive and technology-driven world. The future is bright for robotics and automation, and their role in shaping the next generation of industries is only just beginning.

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